

Wycombe Wanderers 1, Clapton 0

THE FORTUNES of football never cease to amaze the paying customer and faithful supporters of Wycombe Wanderers have experienced both joy and sorrow in the short space of 48-hours.

In the F.A. Cup replay at St. Albans an inspired Wanderers were knocked-out in a piece of pure soccer injustice after dominating the whole of the play.

Yet, just two days later — at Loakes Park on Saturday — a ragged Wycombe took both Isthmian League points thanks to an own goal.

It was certainly a case of Christmas arriving early as Clapton right-half Sprague presented Wanderers with two valuable points which keeps them amongst the championship frontrunners. To be honest this was about the only way in which Wycombe could have taken the points.

Busby in

Generally, their play was unco-ordinated, laborious in mid-field build up and lacking in any real penetration inside the 18-yard box. With Len Worley unavailable to play through a leg injury, Viv Busby who has been sitting on the substitute bench for the past three games came into the team at outside-right.

Wanderers started briskly with both Samuels and Horseman having shots saved. There was no hint of the trouble to follow as Wycombe settled to dictate the tempo.

However, Clapton sounded an early danger warning when Rundle hesitated in tackling as Harris's shot was well gathered at the second attempt by Maskell, who had narrowed the angle.

Clapton 'keeper Moore proved the hero of the moment when he did well to reach Horseman's volley from Thompson's headed pass but Moore was soon to become the villain of the piece.

As Horseman floated a corner into the Clapton six-yard box Moore quite clearly pushed Samuels in the back before



Clapton goalkeeper Moore punches clear from Keith Samuels during Saturday's Isthmian League game at Loakes Park. Stuart Thompson awaits developments.

gathering the cross. To everyone's amazement the referee, only a yard from the incident, awarded a free-kick in Clapton's favour.

It was perhaps fortunate for Wanderers that Clapton failed to exploit the full potential of their centre-forward Chivers, who proved more than a handful for Rundle to control. In fact Chivers came out on top in their personal exchanges as Rundle appeared to be uncertain in timing his interceptions.

Lailey hurt

In the 34th minute Julian Lailey fell awkwardly while contesting a cross with Ballard. Although he was to return eight minutes later Lailey looked far from comfortable and did not appear for the second half with Vince Faulkner substituting.

The only goal of the match came five minutes after the break and was a personal tragedy for Clapton right-half Sprague. Baker lofted a harmless-looking cross into the area and while 'keeper Moore advanced to cut out the danger Sprague rose above his colleague to head into the empty net.

Even this gift goal could not

MATCH DETAILS

Wycombe Wanderers: J. Maskell; L. Temel, C. Gale; J. Lailey (V. Faulkner), I. Rundle, D. Thomas; V. Busby, B. Baker, K. Samuels, A. Horseman, S. Thompson.

Clapton: P. Moore; P. Smith, J. Kerr; B. Sprague, F. Farey, C. Watson; J. Burton, C. Ballard, J. Chivers, A. Harris, J. Dover.

Corners — Wycombe 10, Clapton 3.

Free-kicks (conceded) Wycombe 8, Clapton 8.

Referee: Mr. F. Clark (Upminster)

help Wycombe raise the standard of their play. Samuels, playing under the handicap of a badly gashed eyebrow, which had earlier been spurting blood, poked a simple chance wide from five yards. Minutes later Busby went close as he glanced Horseman's cross the wrong side of a post.